



Mosque at Sirte, Libya



OCTOBER 2010

S	31	3	10	17	24
M		4	11	18	25
T		5	12	19	26
W		6	13	20	27
T		7	14	21	28
F	1	8	15	22	29
S	2	9	16	23	30

As I write these words, the final countdown to Delhi's tryst with the Commonwealth Games has started. There is about a day to go before the Games begin. With athletes from dozens of countries – from Barbados to Papua New Guinea, from the Channel Islands to New Zealand; it promises to be an **extravaganza beyond compare**.

Of course it has all been done at the last minute, and yes we know that there are some glitches; but like most Delhites – optimistic to the last – I believe that the city will benefit from the Games at least with respect to the infrastructure – as long as it survives the rains!

Whist on the subject of weathering: I would like to introduce our readers to a fantastic material- weathering or weather resistant steel manufactured by Arcelor-Mittal – and popularly known as Cor-Ten or Corten steel. This is the material that we are using to clad the Grand Mosque at Sirte, Libya (read my article for more details). Seen here is an image of the **Gatehead** monument in the UK.



The interior finishing on the Archohm office is in full swing; with work going on day and night. It is probably the **one project in Delhi that is within budget and before schedule**. Of course we have the benefit of not having too many wise heads and 'international consultants involved'!

We have a very interesting article on the link between music and architecture- aptly named 'Music-lecture' by the author- Anirudha Sundaresan, an architectural trainee who is a professional Tabla artiste and teacher. I share with you the view of Daniel Libeskind, noted architect, on the links between music and architecture:

*"What is music? Music has to do with an enormous discipline. To play an instrument, to read music, to perform music, requires a discipline. This is one of the connecting links between music and architecture, because both are extremely rigorous engagements... If you really want to play a melody, you have to hit every note correctly, and every tempo and every harmony has to be there..."*

*And I think that is true of architecture: you cannot really do architecture approximately, you have to do it exactly. And what ties them together in my own experience is the element of time and the element of mathematics..."*

We also have an article on a University at Copenhagen, by the ever dependable Sanjay Rawat (written whilst he was battling the evil forces of Dengue!) News about our company and Sourabh's end piece in his inimitable and trademark style round up this issue of Archohm.

- Kunal Savarkar

FEEDBACK: Please address all feedback to Atul at: [archohmteam@archohm.com](mailto:archohmteam@archohm.com)

## editorial

## Archohm works

Situated in the Sharjah Area of the picturesque seaside town of Sirte, Libya, the Sirte Mosque is destined to be one of the most elegant mosques in this part of the world. The mosque is very **strategically located**- and cannot be missed by anyone driving in from Tripoli; thanks to its location on Sirte's principal road.

Replacing an older structure, this new mosque is a **triumph of both form and function**; combining all the traditional religious and social functions of a mosque; with the needs and aspirations of the people it caters to, using materials that represent the strength of modern technology.

The Sirte mosque is a centrally air conditioned structure, on the lines of the holy mosque at Medina. The alignment with the Kiblah (Mecca) has resulted in an interesting play with respect to the road.

The interiors will use Italian marble, like Travertine and other exotic stones like Onyx, which lends itself to back lighting, in conjunction with specially designed carpets.

The building will be iconic in nature, using a specially designed fascia manufactured from **Cor-ten steel and copper sheeting**, both of which will be resilient to the sea-side conditions. Cor-ten steel is a group of steel alloys developed to obviate the need for painting. It's property of forming a stable rust-like appearance if exposed to the weather for several years makes it a widely used fascia material across the coastal towns of Europe- from Iberia to Scandinavia.

Our HVAC design consultant, Mr Abid Husain, visited the Grand Mosque at Medina, Saudi Arabia, and has proposed an AC system similar to the one used there. The interiors of this mosque are designed to be elegant and maintenance free, simple yet tasteful.

In the images shown here you can see both a day as well as a night view of the mosque.



A project of great piety, for the good of the community, and a testimony to divine inspiration! For Archohm the design team comprises Sourabh, Bhoomika, Amit Sinha, Richa, Haider and yours truly - and I can say one thing on behalf of us all - the Sirte Mosque is a building that we truly look forward to being finished in all its glory!



**Kunal Savarkar** - Kunal, the international face of Archohm spans the polar opposites of construction practices of Japan and Libya. Kunal is at perpetual war on every front to match construction ease and beat the cost, keeping Archohm's design intent intact.

**Music-lecture**. Can we derive a relationship between two distinct creative realms – that of static and solid architecture with the dynamic and fluid field of music?

I believe we can.

**Music like architecture has a rhythm, a harmony, a structure, a texture, a theme, a form, a flow and also intervals and spaces.**

In music one cannot be approximately right. Only if every instrument strikes the perfect note at the perfect time within the given framed structure can the music be perfect. One can either follow the same rhythm to flow with the composition, or maybe alter the rhythm at places to accentuate the composition. We have to structure the intervals to perfection, to give the composition a form that can heighten the senses to a level beyond which one is left in awe.

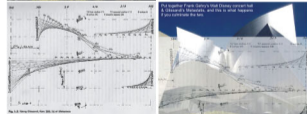
The same applies to architecture as well. This can be seen while excavating the similarities between the Parthenon, le Corbusier and Debussy's- reflection in the water, (a piece of classical music)? Notice the golden section. In Debussy's composition, the intervals of keys are defined at the notes 34, 21, 13 and 8 which are in the sequence corresponding to the golden section of the Parthenon. Therefore we can say that music and architecture share a definition and discipline.

This brings me to my concluding question. **Can music be used as a design tool??**

Yes it can! This is seen in the flow of form in Zaha Hadid's works as the turns and trills of the 'the fortune' are so well defined by the highs and the lows of her architecture. Likewise, the rigidity of Corbusier's form, the treatment of his colonnades, the clean facades, can be resounded in the constant of the march past bands.

Therefore, as seen in above examples, music hasn't just been used as an element to enhance the ambience of spaces but also as a strategic design tool which is capable of yielding varied solutions, which we can apply in our creative practice.

In conclusion I would like you to try an exercise - take a piece of paper, and treat the same as a facade of a building. Listen to different genres of music and see how many different options you can get while listening to it.



**Anirudha Sundaresan**- Architectural Trainee, neighbour (to Kunal), the 'kid' in office - handworking (when 'urged on'), but most certainly intelligent (thanks to genetics). Anirudha has been developing architectural concepts for Public Buildings as part of the Libyan team.

## in focus

One of the benefits of working with Archohm is the continuous exposure that one gets to the various fields of architecture and design. In keeping with that trend, a group of 20 Archohm staffers recently visited Scandinavia.

Though it was Archolour 3 but for me, it was my first foray into Europe and I was very excited to see the designs of great architects as it is very difficult to feel a place or building through books or pictures until you visit the place.

During Archolour we visited approx 100 projects in 12 days and the IT University, Copenhagen was one of the project which I liked the most.

The University was established in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1999 and in 2004, the University moved to its own new building in the northern part of Ørestad. The new building was designed by Danish architect Henning Larsen and the gross floor area of the building is approx 19000 sqm.

The IT University is arranged around a large central atrium. The five storeys are between the atrium and from the balconies you can survey activities elsewhere in the building. A number of group and meeting rooms have been extended out into the atrium, suspended like a long row of see-through 'drawers' that have been pulled out to different lengths.

By changing back projections on the meeting boxes, a digital art installation by the American artist John Maeda creates a dynamic and interactive visual composition in the atrium.

The ground floor comprises the common facilities; lecture halls, students' café, canteen and library. All research and teaching areas are located on the upper floors. Teaching facilities in open study areas surrounding the atrium and research departments in the calmer zones at both ends of the building.

The building stands elevated above terrain. A metal clad frame folds around the entire volume in one singular dynamic movement. The glass facades inside the frame are divided into horizontal ribbons of glass of varying colour and character – powerful green-coloured glass, translucent glass and clear glass.

Seeing is, truly believing!



**Sanjay Rawat** - Architect, Engineer, Project Manager – all in one combination. Well that is Sanjay Rawat for you. An old Archohm hand, he has the ability to transform concepts into reality at site - an ability that architects must possess!

**News:**

**Carpet factory visit:** OBEETEE, an old carpet manufacturer from Mirzapur in Uttar Pradesh, invited Archohm team members to their factory and showroom in Noida. Archohm explored the technology and diversity in this product with an adaptability to customisation. First experiments with the Archohm office are underway.



**Office shifting works:** Archohm shifting works have begun. Warming up for the big move on diwali, Shehzaad has been given the opportunity to captain the cause.

**Commonwealth break:** Archohm decides to work through all remaining Saturdays of 2010 to afford a full closure during the games as its contribution towards its 'success'.

**Upcoming projects:**

**LnT plazas** at Saranikya Gandhiham Tollway, Chennai Tada Tollway, Pimtal gaon - Nasik - Bogone Tollway and Krishnagiri - Walajahpet Tollway. The process of plaza design with the LnT OnM centre is basically to value add and improvise on plaza design, innovate on efficiency and economy, project managing the entire exercise of construction and last but not least, design to the last detail, from high masts to light fittings, from street furniture to office furniture, from booth to building. A comprehensive solution.

**Pink City plaza** project management finally came into Archohm's recent expansion into the field to build quality plazas. This would mean a fresh team coming together under the able guidance of Nabin Patra and Raghu Rajan.

BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH:		NEW JOINEES:	
Sanjay Rawat	Second	Apurva Kumar	Executive assistant to the Director
Ajit	Tenth	Richa Shah	Architect
Mohit Mathur	Seventeenth	Shweta Singhal	Interior Designer
Amit Amit	Twenty Second		



## designs

## sourabh's desk

'ramadan karim', I wish abdul adeem, senior client architect at 2300 hours as we sat on our presentation for the oiya business park in tripoli site office to take approvals on landscape and lighting schemes.

archohm in libya has been a great personal experience. our team, the clients, the client's client and the indian archohm team back home are an incredibly interesting combination of energies and influences that determine the final product at site. 'value engineering' gets a new dimension as we embark to learn and apply our design and engineering skills to make solutions more economical and construction friendly, with efficiency and aesthetics as a given by-product.

the sheer energy and opportunity one senses as one lands into this african country is incredible. a wannabe dubai that aspires to turn global overnight is a construction sight of sorts. in the last two years of our presence there, we have seen the emergence of five star hotels, markets, business parks and an intent on streetscaping that is phenomenal. as an indian presence, the likes of J&J, shaorqi palorji, simplex, purji kroyd are established players undertaking large construction challenges.



for archohm it has been an elevation to the next level of a design practice. as we move to our new domain next month, it establishes us as a large practice that has moved beyond the odd buildings and the regular plazas, the fun interiors and the challenging campus designs. it has added the dimension of scale unparalleled and unequal. a typical development at say seba or kufra opens up design challenges that span multiple schools, hotels, markets and houses. the design issue evolves beyond an architectural expression into systems and standardization. development of a language across a town ship to integrate it as a unit brings in the additional complexities of services and structures.

talking of typologies on building design, we at archohm have become a specialist in mosques. we are presently **designing over half a dozen mosques** in these developments. to top the list is of course the feature of the month, the **sirte mosque** that aspires to be the landmark of this goddamn hometown.

our association with mosques has been reinforced by our new office location facing the 'noida jama masjid', the epitome of this ramadan was the prayers on our four floors of construction site as the entire road was clogged with this year's watershed, a sure sign of community living and blessings for archohm.